

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT MAINE'S PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL SALTWATER ANGLER REGISTRY

1. Why is the Maine Department of Marine Resources (DMR) creating a registry of saltwater recreational anglers?

In 2007, the US Congress reauthorized the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation and Management Act. In the reauthorization, they included a requirement that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) develop a comprehensive list of everyone who fishes recreationally in marine waters. This is necessary to improve the surveys of saltwater anglers, which generate the information used to help manage and rebuild fish stocks. Congress gave the states the option to either develop their own registry system, or have their citizens be subject to federal registry requirements. In 2010, the Maine Legislature passed a Maine saltwater registry, thereby exempting Maine from the federal requirement. The registry is administered by the Maine Department of Marine Resources, and goes into effect January 1, 2011.

2. What "marine waters" are included, for the purposes of requiring registration for saltwater angling?

If you will be fishing anywhere within the rise and fall of the tide (up the rivers to head of tide), or from a Maine port out to the limits of the Exclusive Economic Zone (200 miles), you must have a valid saltwater fishing registration.

3. Who needs to register? How much does it cost?

A Maine saltwater recreational fishing registration is required for individuals 16 years of age and older fishing in Maine's coastal waters. However, individuals that possess a valid Maine freshwater fishing license are not required to register separately with the Maine Department of Marine Resources. When purchasing their Maine freshwater fishing license, individuals will be asked, "Did you fish in the tidal waters of the State of Maine last year?" By answering this question, they will meet the basic registry requirement. Freshwater license holders must possess their license when they are engaging in saltwater fishing, to prove compliance.

There is no cost for the registration, for either residents or nonresidents. However, a \$1 agent fee applies if you register directly through ME DMR, and a \$2 agent fee applies if you register online or through a DMR designated agent.

4. Who needs to purchase the Striped Bass Endorsement? How much does it cost?

You must purchase a Striped Bass Endorsement if you are:

- a Maine resident who has not purchased a valid freshwater fishing license, and you intend to fish for or catch striped bass in the coastal waters of the state, OR
- a non-resident who intends to fish for or catch striped bass in the coastal waters of the state

"Fishing for or catching" striped bass includes any incidental catch or bycatch of striped bass, as well as the landing of striped bass for the purposes of a "catch and release" fishery.

The Striped Bass Endorsement is \$5 for Maine residents, and \$15 for non-residents. Maine residents age 70 or older can pay a one-time fee of \$10, and then renew that endorsement annually free of charge.

5. Where can I register, and where can I purchase the Striped Bass Endorsement?

You can register, as well as purchase a Striped Bass Endorsement:

- online at **www.maine.gov/saltwater**, OR
- at an agent appointed by DMR (list available at: <http://www.maine.gov/dmr/recreational>), OR
- in person at the DMR licensing office in Hallowell
(directions: <http://www.maine.gov/dmr/headquarters.htm>)

6. Why do you need my phone number?

The purpose of creating a Registry of saltwater recreational fishermen is so that these anglers can be accurately surveyed by phone, to assess their level of activity. The Registry will make it much more efficient to find anglers to survey, and it will include a broader representation of anglers. Instead of asking a random sample of coastal U.S. residents if they've gone fishing (which is what is currently done), the registry will allow surveyors to call upon those who have already identified themselves as saltwater fishermen. The surveys collect information about who is fishing, when they fish, and what species and how many fish they catch.

For some species of fish, the recreational catch far outpaces the commercial harvest. In addition, in many communities, recreational fishing is a major economic driver, affecting everything from the hospitality industry to fuel sales to outfitters and small businesses. Accurately capturing the many contributions of recreational fishermen will help to ensure that these interests are properly considered in resource allocation and other policy matters.

7. Are there any exceptions to the registration requirement?

You do not need to register in order to participate in saltwater fishing in the following situations:

- When fishing as a passenger on a party/charter or head boat operated by an individual who holds a valid Commercial Operator's license
- When fishing for smelt from a smelt camp rented from an individual who holds a valid Commercial Operator's license

In addition, you may be eligible for a waiver from the registry requirement if you can provide documentation from a physician that you:

- Are blind
- Are a paraplegic
- Have an acquired brain injury
- Are mentally handicapped

You are also eligible for a waiver if you can provide documentation from the Veteran's Administration that you are a disabled veteran.

Eligibility requirements to obtain a waiver are available at: <http://www.maine.gov/dmr/recreational>

8. Where do the revenues from the Striped Bass Endorsement go?

A dedicated fund was established with the passage of the bill that created Maine's saltwater registry. All revenues from the sales of the Striped Bass Endorsement may be used only for the implementation, and administration of the registry, enforcement, and research and conservation efforts related to the saltwater recreational fishery.

9. Are there any free fishing days?

Yes. Maine residents need not register in order to fish legally on July 4th, Labor Day weekend or Memorial Day weekend.

10. Is there any reciprocity for other states?

Yes. A person that possesses a valid New Hampshire saltwater recreational fishing license may engage in recreational saltwater fishing from Maine's southern border to Cape Neddick, without registering with ME DMR.